

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

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R 041259Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9481

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

CINCPAC

SECDEF

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 0235

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y -- PARA THREE --

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH

SUBJECT: RESTRUCTURING OF RTG COUNTERINSURGENCY ORGANIZATION

REF: BANGKOK 19052

SUMMARY: DURING A BRIEFING AT THE COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS
COMMAND (CSOC) JANUARY 4, LTG SAIYUD REVIEWED CSOC ACHIEVEMENTS
DURING THE LAST EIGHT YEARS, CONCLUDING THAT ALTHOUGH "THE
INSURGENCY IS STILL GROWING", THE RTG HAD AT LEAST "RESTRICTED
ITS RATE OF GROWTH." I TOLD SAIYUD THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT IF IT
CONTINUES AT ITS PRESENT RATE OF GROWTH IT COULD DEVELOP TO A
DANGEROUS DEGREE SO AS TO INTERFERE WITH THE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT
OF THE COUNTRY. I STATED I HOPED AT A LATER TIME TO GIVE THE RTG
OUR FRANK APPRAISAL OF WHERE WE BELIEVE THE THREE INSURGENCIES
NOW STAND AND WHERE THEY ARE LIKELY TO GO IF THE PRESENT LACKA-
DAISICAL APPROACH CONTINUES TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE RTG. END SUMMARY.

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2. DURING MY FIRST VISIT TO CSOC HEADQUARTERS JANUARY 4, I HAD

A PRIVATE TALK WITH LTG SAIYUD KERDPHOL, CHAIRMAN OF THE CSOC COORDINATING COMMITTEE, FOLLOWED BY A CSOC BRIEFING.

3. DURING THE PRIVATE CONVERSATION, SAIYUD OUTLINED IN DETAIL HIS PROPOSAL FOR THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE RTG COUNTERINSURGENCY ORGANIZATION. HE IS PROPOSING THAT AN INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION (ISO) BE SET UP DIRECTLY UNDER THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.

THIS WOULD IN EFFECT BE CSOC UNDER A NEW NAME. THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WOULD NO LONGER INTERVENE IN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THIS CSOC SUOYCESSOR ORGANIZATION. UNDER ISO, PURELY DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES AND THE MORE MILITARILY ORIENTED COUNTERINSURGENCY FUNCTIONS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT BY TWO SEPARATE ORGANIZATIONS. ONE WOULD BE INVOLVED EXCLUSIVELY IN CIVIC ACTION, INCLUDING SUCH ACTIVITIES AS THOSE OF THE MOBILE DEVELOPMENT UNITS AND THE ACCELERATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. THE OTHER WOULD BE HEADED BY A JOINT OPERATIONS COMMAND UNDER WHICH THE VARIOUS VILLAGE SELF-DEFENSE, POLICE AND MILITARY ACTIVITIES WOULD BE COORDINATED.

SAIYUD SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY TALKED WITH LTG KRANGSAK AND GENERAL SURAKIJ ABOUT HIS PROPOSAL AND CAME AWAY WITH THE FEELING THAT THESE TWO MEN SUPPORTED HIM. SAIYUD NOTED THAT SANYA WOULD BE DISCUSSING THE CSOC RE-ORGANIZATION MATTERS DURING THE AFTERNOON WITH THE CABINET BUT HE DOUBTED THAT IT WOULD COME TO ANY DECISION FOR SOME TIME YET.

4. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE STANDARD CSOC BRIEFING, SAIYUD MADE SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS OF HIS OWN. IN HIS VIEW CSOC HAD FOUR MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE EIGHT YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE:

A. THE CT HAD BEEN CONTAINED "TO A CERTAIN EXTENT" ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL PLAN;

B. IN SOME VILLAGES CT INFLUENCE HAD BEEN ELIMINATED ALTHOUGH THIS HAD BEEN BALANCED BY THE EXPANSION OF CT INFLUENCE IN OTHER AREAS;

C. SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN EDUCATING BOTH RTG OFFICIALS AND THE PEOPLE AT LARGE CONCERNING THE REAL DANGER WHICH THE CPT
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RURAL INSURRECTION POSED; AND

D. A CONSENSUS HAD BEEN REACHED WITHIN CSOC CONCERNING THE CORRECT CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES TO BE USED IN CI EFFORTS. THESE HAD BEEN EMBODIED IN SPECIFIC PLANS AND POLICY STATEMENTS, AND INCORPORATED INTO HANDBOOKS FOR FIELD USE.

5. SAIYUD CONCLUDED THAT "THE INSURGENCY IS STILL GROWING. ALTHOUGH

WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ELIMINATE IT, WE BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE RESTRICTED ITS RATE OF GROWTH". HE SAID THAT THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO A MORE EFFECTIVE CI PROGRAM IS THE FACT THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF THE CI PROGRAM ITSELF ARE NOT FULLY SUPPORTED BY THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP.

6. I COMMENTED THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE INSURGENCY IS NOT NOW A SERIOUS THREAT TO THAI SECURITY BUT THAT IF IT BONTINUES AT ITS PRESENT RATE OF GROWTH IT COULD DEVELOP TO A DANGEROUS DEGREE SO AS TO INTERFERE WITH THE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY. I NOTED THAT IT SEEMED TO ME THAT THE RTG HAS THE RIGHT CONCEPTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CI EFFORT AND THE MATERIAL STRENGTH NEEDED. I REAFFIRMED MY PREFERENCE FOR A SITUATION IN WHICH THE RTG WOULD REQUEST HELP FROM US ON SPECIFIC INSURGENCY MATTERS RATHER THAN THE SITUATION IN WHICH THE US WAS APPEARING TO TELL THE THAIS WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. I TOLD SAIYUD THAT AFTER I HAD BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE RTG LEADERSHIP, I WOULD LIKE TO LAY BEFORE THEM A FRANK APPRAISAL OF WHERE WE BELIEVE THE THREE INSURGENCIES STAND AND WHERE THEY ARE LIKELY TO GO IF THE PRESENT LACKADAISICAL APPROACH CONTINUES TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE RTG. I COMMENTED IN CONCLUSION THAT UNLESS BOTH SIDES AT THE TOP LEVELS HAVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING THE FACTS OF THE INSURGENCY AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, THERE WOULD NOT EXIST THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE CAN EFFECTIVELY HELP THE RTG IN THIS FIELD. IN RESPONSE HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT A COMMON UNDERSTANDING WAS ESSENTIAL AND COULD BE DEVELOPED BY BOTH FORMAL AND INFORMAL EXCHANGES.

6. A COMPLETE REVIEW OF THE CI EFFORT IN THAILAND ALONG WITH OUR RECOMMENDED APPROACH WILL BE SUBMITTED SHORTLY.
KINTNER

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